

CITY OF TERRE HAUTE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Terre Haute Human Relations Commission

Wednesday, February 19, 2025, Minutes

City Hall, 5:00 PM

Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by President Sandy Mutchler at 5:04 PM.

Present: Director, AT Ryan. President, Sandy Mutchler, Commissioners: Dee Reed, Uzziah Hutchinson, Jacqueline Lower, Amber Stewart. Non-voting members: Justin Sears (virtual) and Katie Lugar (virtual).

Absent: Commissioners: Dana Simons and Nichelle Campbell-Miller.

Approval of January Minutes – A motion was made by Dee Reed to accept the January minutes and was seconded by Jacqueline Lower. The motion passed.

Director's Report – Every member received a copy of the Director's Report and Financial Report. Director Ryan attended many meetings and events during the month of January. The director shared she was voted in as an interim secretary for the Homeless Coalition. There were also several activities that the HRC hosted during the month of January that were well attended by the community and commissioners. There was one inquiry in regards to housing discrimination. This call was related to mold being in the person's apartment. Since it was not discrimination there is no further action needed. There were also updates on ongoing projects the commission is assisting with or hosting. A motion to accept the Director's report and Financial Report was made by Uzziah Hutchinson and seconded by Amber Stewart. The motion was passed.

Old Business

MLK Day 2025 Recap – All commissioners received an outline of the MLK Day Recap. The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day events were successfully held on January 18 and January 20, 2025. Story Hour at the Vigo County Public Library (Jan. 18) was attended by approximately 50 people. A book was read by Mayor Brandon Sakbun and children received a free book and participated in activities that were civil rights related. The Panel Discussion at the Vigo County History Center (Jan. 20) was attended by approximately 80 people. The panelists engaged in a meaningful discussion on "Where Do We Go From Here? Chaos or Community?" The next steps are to gather feedback so we can improve the events next year and consider a partnership between the VCSC. Dee Reed suggested that we should have a QR code that people can scan at the event to provide us with feedback. Katie Lugar suggested that the moderator be more strict with the alluded time for each speaker so everyone gets a chance to talk.

Black History Month 2025 – All commissioners received a copy of the Black History Month Banner updates. Following the completion of the nomination and selection process, the Black History Month honoree banners were installed and events are in progress. The banner installation ceremony took place on January 31, 2025 with community members and local officials in attendance. A recognition reception was held on January 28 at the Vigo County History Center. The VCPL is assisting with the digitization of

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the past honorees' banners. Director Ryan shared that the HRC Director of Evansville reached out to her and was inspired by our banners, so they plan to do it in the future. It was noted that the area for the reception was small and there should possibly be a small gift for the honorees in the future.

Attendance Policy – All commissioners received a copy of the proposed attendance policy. There was a discussion regarding potential updates to the attendance policy to ensure all commission members remain actively engaged. There were clarification of acceptable absences, enforcement measures for repeated absence, and defined expectations for participation in events beyond meetings. A motion to accept the new attendance policy was made by Amber Stewart and seconded by Dee Reed.

Virtual Attendance Policy - All commissioners received a copy of the proposed virtual attendance policy. Given the increased demand for flexibility, the commission will discuss whether adjustments should be made to allow the virtual attendance under specific circumstances. The discussion points were: legal and procedural considerations, potential technology solutions for ensuring participation and engagement, and equity concerns regarding accessibility. The item was tabled until AT could talk to the City's Legal team.

Indiana State University's Out of the Darkness Suicide Prevention Walk – All commissioners received a copy of the sponsorship packet for the walk. After reviewing the group decided not to proceed with a sponsorship.

Discussion – Upcoming Events and Programs – The group had a discussion about what they wanted to focus on for upcoming programs and events. The idea to plan a trip in the fall to the Underground Railroad Museum in Cincinnati was mentioned. The group also discussed coordinating additional events related to education about the Underground Railroad to coincide with the trip.

Statements from Commissioners

Jackie Lower suggested that there be a contact sheet for the group. AT agreed and said she would send one out virtually.

Amber Stewart mentioned that she would be participating in Ivy Tech Diversity Equity and Belonging Dinner on March 6th at the History Museum. Dee Reed offered to send out an email for folks interested in attending.

Adjournment

Jackie motioned to adjourn the meeting. Amber seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.